

CHARLES M. BARR 1919 - 1952

Entomology has lost a very devoted student in the untimely death of Charles M. Barr on September 6, 1952. He was professionally employed with a paper firm in Washington, D. C. and pursued entomology as a beloved hobby.

He was born October 19, 1919 at Holyoke, Massachusetts, and his interest in insects began in that New England town where he collected Lepidoptera. In 1935 he moved with his parents to Easton, Maryland where he continued collecting and began shifting emphasis to the Coleoptera and Hemiptera. For the next six years, his summers were spent at "Solitude", a delightful waterfront farm ten miles from Easton. This environment must have contributed greatly to the firm establishment of his interests in insects and natural history.

He enrolled at the University of Maryland in the College of Business Administration in 1937 and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1941. In October of their freshman year, Mr. Barr and the writer became fast friends; and thenceforth collecting trips were made together at every available opportunity during the school years in the vicinity of College Park. During World War II, Mr. Barr served forty months with the Transportation Corps of the U. S. Army in England and France. He attained the grade of First Sergeant.

Between 1946 and the time of his death, Mr. Barr had become a valued friend of a number of entomologists and botanists in the vicinity of College Park and Washington, D. C. He was a frequent guest at Plummer Island and accompanied the late H. S. Barber, W. S. Fisher, and the writer on a number of trips to the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia. There was also a memorable trip to the coastal area of North Carolina in quest of *Trachykele*. Mr. Barr accompanied entomology students from the University of Maryland as well as the writer on collecting trips in the vicinity of College Park and into the wilds of Southern Maryland along the tidewater Potomac and its tributaries. Collecting trips were always made for the day or over weekends with camping over night.

In addition to providing congenial and stimulating companionship to entomologist friends in the field, Mr. Barr made avail-

able his expert knowledge of fine quality papers and printing methods to those who were interested in printed labels for their collections and in high quality bristols for card point mounting. His suggestions and advice along these lines resulted in marked improvement in the preparation of a number of private and institutional collections.

To Mr. Barr, entomology was not a means for gaining personal distinction, but rather it was a subject to be enjoyed for the wonderful world it opens up to the sincere student. It was a means for him to get out into the field and forest with friends of kindred interests. This endeavor he seemed to enjoy above all else. Second only to his love for the out of doors was his satisfaction gained from preparation and study of his collections at home in the evenings and on days when weather was forbidding for collecting trips. An added measure of satisfaction for him was gained in producing the homemade pinning trays and drawers used to house his collections. Utilizing his knowledge of paper technology, he ingeniously fashioned these of cardboards and papers with pinning bottoms of pulped newspapers. Mr. Bass published no papers on entomology.

His extensive insect collection has been donated as the Charles M. Barr Memorial Collection to the Holyoke Museum of Natural History and Art by his father, Charles H. Barr, and his brother, F. Allen Barr who survive him. Composed mostly of Maryland fauna, the collection contains approximately 7,500 specimens of Coleoptera and Hemiptera and about 1,000 specimens of Lepidoptera. All of this material is meticulously mounted and is in an excellent state of preservation. Also, a file of several thousand papered specimens, mostly duplicates, and a small amount of alcoholic material are included. A valuable feature of the collection is the wealth of biological data accompanying the specimens. In addition to the usual locality and date labels, a serial number on each mounted specimen refers to careful collecting notes. While the collection contains no type material, it is a valuable source of biological and distributional records and should be consulted by workers interested in such data. The collection which is accurately classified and in great part named will be a valuable source of information and inspiration to entomologically inclined people of the Holyoke area.

To those that knew him, he will always be remembered for his quiet unassuming manner, his sincerity and modesty, and his kind consideration of others. He was a faithful correspondent to his friends, and his letters are examples of choice rhetoric. A few excerpts from some of the letters received by the writer bear out Mr. Barr's fine human nature and interests:

April 22, 1951

"Yesterday, a bright sunny day, I went out to the Paint Branch area, where I spent a lot of time just wandering. It is very pleasant there at this time of year, as you know. Brought back a few beetles, nothing unusual. Caught a tree frog in some damp grass near the end of the path where our beach used to be. Brought it home and the *Triatoma (lecticularius)* seemed to like it. Two of the smallest *Triatoma* were put in with it over night, and this morning both were fully engorged. I replaced them with two more little fellows. Am afraid to feed the big nymphs until the little ones have fed because they may drain the frog dry. Am using the semicircular cheese boxes for the feeding cage because the lids are not tight. Keep the box in a closed paper bag in case the bugs escape which they didn't do last night. . . ."

July 30, 1951

"You will recall my mentioning that in the Flora of D.C. the author lamented the growth of Washington out into the Georgetown area and beyond, just as you and I have squawked about the apartment houses going up all over our old stamping grounds. Flora of D.C. was written I think in about 1917. In the Easton library I found a book on ferns written in 1899 which contained exactly the same sort of comment. And that was fifty years ago! So maybe Caesar was yapping about the Romans putting marble columns up all over his domain, if the right book be looked in. So you see, George, our bellyaching is not new. It has just become more acute. In the 1899 book they spoke of taking a train and a three-day expedition to locate some ferns growing about 25 miles away. Before automobiles the country was unspoiled, but for the very reason that it was inaccessible. Can't have our cake and eat it too. . . ."

November 28, 1951

“The monkeys, parrots and other forms, not least of all the lizards must really be something to see in nature. The giant lizard prancing around frisky as a pet dog was one of my vivid memories of visits to the Washington Zoo. It just didn't seem possible.

“Discovered the new glue I used on the trays has a tendency to rust pins. Have an experiment in progress to determine with certainty that the fault is with the glue. Am glad I kept dates and construction details on the bottoms of trays. It makes it easy to spot the lots that must be watched. Will have to switch back to using Cico paste on the pinning surface. Will continue the new glue on the other portions. Am undecided what action to take on the existing bad trays. Oiling or paraffin on pin tips may cure the trouble. All the pins do not rust, but enough to annoy me and that's plenty. The pins that have been in Cico glued trays for four years have no sign of rust. The bad trays start in January 1950 when Arabal paste was begun.”

December 13, 1951

“Thought I had been hearing suspicious noises in my desk for the last couple evenings. I looked through some loose paper bags and found an elaterid captured November 22 had revived. He certainly waited a long time before making his presence known.”

April 27, 1952

“It is raining cats and dogs and (I hope) bugs. Has been for about four days. Last week summer landed with 85 degree temperature. Now it is cold again. First day of sun after all this rain will bring all the lawnmowers out in a hurry.”

“A couple weeks ago on blossoms of pear trees (which I had overlooked in previous years) found extensive series of *Orsodacne* of which I previously had only one specimen. Found on nearby willow blossoms numerous pairs showing inter-breeding of all so-called “varieties” of which Blatchley lists quite a few. There were black males mated with stiped females and vice versa. Also black males and females and stiped males and females. Makes an interesting array. Extreme variability.”

GEORGE B. VOGT, *U. S. Department of Agriculture.*